What is claimed is:

1. A method for detecting shadow regions in an image, the steps comprising:

a) providing an original image;

b) modeling said image as a reliable lattice (RL);

c) determining a relationship between said RL model and an Markov (MRF) model;

d) applying region level verification to said MRF model; and

e) identifying shadow regions in said original image from said MRF model.

2. The method for detecting shadow regions in an image as recited in claim 1, wherein said original image is a single, static image.

3. The method for detecting shadow regions in an image as recited in claim 2, wherein said single, static image is illuminated by substantially a single point illumination source.

4. The method for detecting shadow regions in an image as recited in claim 2, wherein said single point illumination source is the sun.

5. The method for detecting shadow regions in an image as recited in claim 2, wherein said single, static image comprises an aerial image.

6. The method for detecting shadow regions in an image as recited in claim 1, wherein said modeling said image as an RL step (b) comprises the sub-step of modeling an initial RL.

7. The method for detecting shadow regions in an image as recited in claim 6, wherein said modeling said image as an RL step (b) further comprises the sub-step of updating said initial RL.

8. The method for detecting shadow regions in an image as recited in claim 7, wherein said sub-step of updating said initial RL comprises iteratively updating said initial RL.

9. The method for detecting shadow regions in an image as recited in claim 8, wherein said sub-step of iteratively updating said initial RL continues until at least one of the conditions have been met: a predetermined number of iterations are performed, and until a predetermined condition is met.

10. The method for detecting shadow regions in an image as recited in claim 1, wherein said modeling said image as an RL step (b) comprises the sub-step of determining the reliability of said RL.

11. The method for detecting shadow regions in an image as recited in claim 10, wherein said sub-step of determining the reliability of said RL comprises determining a maximum reliability of said RL.

12. The method for detecting shadow regions in an image as recited in claim 10, wherein said sub-step of determining a maximum reliability of said RL comprises using an expectation maximization (EM) algorithm.

13. The method for detecting shadow regions in an image as recited in claim 1, the steps further comprising:

f) removing at least one false shadow region from a list of detected shadow regions.

14. The method for detecting shadow regions in an image as recited in claim 1, the steps further comprising:

f) preprocessing said original image from an a red/green/blue RGB) color space into a normalized LogRGB space.

15. The method for detecting shadow regions in an image as recited in claim 1, the steps further comprising:

f) performing region level verification.

16. The method for detecting shadow regions in an image as recited in claim 15, wherein said performing region level verification step (f) comprises further exploiting domain knowledge.